795
778 In the Eastern corner was a small length of inner wall covered with dry grass, from which a shrub was growing so as to leave a covered but hollow space between the walls."

795 The alter-post mentioned in the report and which is now in the
778 Museum, is a piece of wood standing some 3½ to 4 feet high and about
5 or 6 inches in diameter. One end has been carved with the result
231 that it appears to be an unmistakeable phallus. That this is intentional, however, has been strongly denied by all those questioned about it, and, from the manner of my informants, I am inclined to believe that what they say is true—as far as it goes, and for the following reasons. In every Luo boma the cattle are tied up at night to wooden posts embedded in the ground. Each beast as a rule has a post—called in Dholuo, " Loth,"—to itself. Where the owner of
[531] the boma has an exceptionally fine bullock he marks it out for distinction by putting a metal bell—not unlike a Swiss cattle-bell—round it's neck and further he carves it an especially ornamental Loth. This carving is almost invariably phallic in shape, and I expect that the idol in the Museum was probably a loth uprooted from a nearby boma.

795 The point which was stressed to me was that although nearly all
778 carved Lothes appear to be undeniably phallic, yet this is entirely accidental and has no intended sexual symbolism or meaning whatsoever. It was just the custom to carve them thus.

174 Now I am prepared to believe that the phallic appearance of these
831 Lothes is produced unconsciously and without sexual significance, but, considering the geographical origin of the Luo and further the nature of the Mumbo beliefs, I consider that it is more than probable that the Lothes in their present-day domestic capacity are the unconscious relics of phallic cults and practices handed down from unremembered antiquity, and have by now lost all their former phallic meaning. That they have been seized on as symbols in this religion is not surprising when one considers firstly their probable origin, which I have just indicated, and secondly the fact that the gospel of Mumboism in its promises of plenty without having to work for it (the phallus always having been the symbol of Fertility and Plenty) is typical of all phallic religions. If their choice of a phallus for a symbol is not an unconscious re-emergence of long forgotten rites, then it is an extremely interesting instinctive gesture that their choice of emblem should coincide with that of other and unconnected races who hold parallel beliefs.

795 It would seem then that Mumboism is a mixture of the old Luo
174 religion of sun worship, and of an even older religion, long forgotten in the mists of Time and now reappearing in a new guise.

795 The prophecies of Mumbo having failed, the cult is dying out,
797 especially in Central Kavirondo, though it appears to be rather more tenacious in South Kavirondo. Further, active discouragement by the Government and the work of the Missions will soon banish it

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altogether. It gains very few new converts and nearly all of these are natives who have broken away from a native-run Christian Mission known as the Nomiya Luo Mission, but these are not very numerous.

In conclusion I would like to offer my explanation of the nature of the " Snake " which swallowed Onyango. One morning in April this year while at Asembo location, on the Lake-shore, I happened to look out towards Homa Mountain on the other side of the Kavirondo Gulf. About a mile from the mountain and over the lake hung low a small bank of clouds. It was about half-past eight in the morning. From the centre of the clouds, and reaching down tenuously to the lake, twisting and swaying, hung a water-spout. The distance, some fifteen miles, made it difficult to estimate its height, but I think that a fair guess would be from 350 to 400 feet. I turned to my interpreter and said, " What do the wata make of that?" and he replied, " Oh, they say that that is the great snake Mumbo!"

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17: Southall E-5 (1946-1947) 1952 FL11 Luo FL11

law as titular owner of the whole herd. The scheme of division may be represented as in the diagram below. All other livestock is divided in the same way. The eldest son of the first wife must marry before any other sons can do so, and if the first wife has no sons the next must wait till there is no further chance of her bearing any. When the first wife dies, the second wife becomes chief wife of the homestead, but a first wife's full status can only be succeeded to when she is replaced by a sister and a new homestead is built. The property of a barren wife is inherited by a stepson who is adopted into her household to do the man's work in it.

CATTLE HERD

All herded together

Head of homestead = joint owners of all

1. *Cattle of the clan*
Entire property of homestead head.

Used to help sons or brothers' sons to marry, or to marry new wives for homestead head.

Residue ultimately inherited by the youngest son of the homestead, who also takes the father's share of cattle from any subsequent marriages of sisters.

All derived from the heifer and bull taken by the father at every daughter's marriage, and from their increase.

Milk from these used by the homestead head.

Cattle of the wives' house
Milk to delight, assist to equalities, etc., among own wives.

2. Cattle entirely property of the wives.

Ultimately inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the heifer called *nak Anak* received by the mothers at each daughter's marriage, and from the heifer of *ariela* and bull settled upon a wife by her father at the end of her marriage ceremonies.

Milk from these used by the wives.

3. Cattle held for sons' marriages.

Any residue inherited by youngest son of each house.

All derived from the cattle received as daughters' marriages other than those specified under 1 and 2.

Homestead head has over all discretion in the original division of incoming cattle, and can persuade wives to give up cattle from category 2 to help stepsons to marry, and may by arrangement take an extra heifer from those received as a daughter's marriage, to complete the bridewealth of one of his other wives.

Succession to authority in the family, and also in the lineage, depends on a combination of three qualifications: primogeniture, personal suitability in character and wealth, and appointment by one's predecessor. Primogeniture is highly regarded and preferred, but is never an absolute rule. Whenever an eldest son is unsuitable, or another agnatic relative is clearly more suitable, the latter is chosen to succeed. But a successor must be named by his predecessor, and as a result of the strong common sentiments in family and lineage segments, the predecessor's appointee seems usually to have been the one whom the elders of the group wish to elect when they meet at the funeral of the predecessor to confirm his choice.

Ancestor worship is falling into abeyance among the Luo of today. All those who go to school become at least nominal Christians, and this affects most of the young, while the old are becoming diffident in the performance of rites which no longer command universal respect. The spirit shrines which used to be placed between the first and second wives' huts are hardly seen today, nor the three stones which used to stand before the spirit shrine, with the stone of sacrifice buried beneath (see

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

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HOMICIDE AND SUICIDE AMONG THE JOLUO OF KENYA

G. M. WILSON

101 The Luo ("Jaluo," singular; "Joluo," plural) are unique in that they are the only Nilotic speaking people in Kenya. Their place of origin is the Nile Valley; through the centuries by gradual expansion by war and peaceful penetration, they migrated up the Nile Valley, through Uganda, into Kenya, along the shores of Lake Victoria. The term Luo means "swamp" and Joluo "the people of the swamp." Through their migrations they have left behind other Nilotic groups in Uganda and in the Sudan.

131 The Joluo are chiefly concentrated in Central Nyanza where over half a million of them are found today. There are, however, Luo pockets in North Nyanza and also in South Nyanza.

631 The Luo of Central Nyanza are divided into twelve tribal groups. Each tribal group, with a Government-appointed chief, today forms an administrative unit, a "Location," within the District of Central Nyanza. These administrative units, laid down in the early twenties, coincide fairly accurately with the former tribal boundaries and are accepted by the people.

614 Each Luo tribe can be described as a society of agnatic parallel lineages or clans, each tracing either real or mythical descent from a common eponym or descent through an adopted or affiliated family to the eponym.

614 178 The original form of the clan and lineage structure remains today in comparative purity. The Joluo people—although on the surface they have accepted Christianity—still retain the ceremonial, religious, and ritual aspects of their culture to a very large degree.

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

group had less than three years' education and over half of the female group had less than two years' education. This pattern, however, as already indicated, is changing rapidly. The majority of the Joluo are nominally Christians, although half of those who called themselves Christians were polygamists. Historically, of course, all of the schools in Luo were Mission schools and therefore those who go to school tend to call themselves "Christians," and most of them in fact have a basic understanding of the Christian religion.

One aspect of Joluo life which has changed considerably is the tremendous increase in spatial mobility. Prior to European ascendancy, the Joluo did not move among the tribal units because of the continual wars between them. Moreover, banishment from the tribe usually meant death at the hands of the neighboring Nandi, Kipsigis, or Masai. Lately, however, the village census established that most Luo males had been out of their district and well over half had been to Nairobi or beyond. At any given point in time nearly one half of the adult male population is engaged in employment away from the tribal area. Nearly one half of the Joluo adult women in the sample, 40 per cent, had been outside of their district, although only 11 per cent had been to Nairobi or beyond. It is the custom, therefore, for married men to migrate for labor and to leave their wives and families in their family locations to cultivate the gardens.[1]

HOMICIDE AMONG JOLUO

The Nilotic Joluo regard violence as an unnecessary loss of control, or at best a calculated necessary last resort to secure

[1] Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard has written a study of the Luo in his "Luo Tribes and Clans" (*Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, No. 7), and description of the marriage customs of the Luo in his "Marriage Customs of the Luo of Kenya" (*Africa*, Vol. xx, No. 1, 1950). Dr. A. Southall has published a memorandum entitled "Lineage Formation among the Luo," Memorandum xxvi, International African Institute, London, 1952. My own work among the Luo, *Law and Custom of the Joluo People of Kenya*, is forthcoming.

19:Wilson E-5 (ca. 1950) 1960
FL11 Luo FL11

159 762 where he was headmaster. His final act was to write to all those involved in this series of incidents, which had taken nearly three years, to the effect that his daughter had killed him, that shame was brought to his clan and lineage, and that the liaison she had formed with Okare would end in disaster. He swore he would return in spirit to ensure that the marriage would end in failure.

159 762 568 747 It can be seen from this case that the difficult transition faced by even the most educated Christian Jaluo is complicated by the intense residual customary law and the attitudes of the people regarding the authority of a father and the duty of his daughter to this authority. The father in his case was a well educated, highly respected, important person in his district. The daughter, by her behavior, had humiliated him and he took recourse in indigenous rules and beliefs to solve his problems. They were initially successful. In the end, however, the threat to his status as a Christian of the fact that he had married his daughter by force to a Christian who was already married and therefore a bigamist in the eyes of the Church, brought shame and disaster to his social position as a Christian headmaster. His final act, however, was typically an indigenous one. He would not face the shame and humiliation brought to him by the course of events, so he took refuge in traditional recourse to suicide as a curse to the future happiness of those whom he thought had caused his grievance. To the end, therefore, he struggled to obtain the best of two worlds.

FEMALE SUICIDES

762 The most common cause of suicide among females is domestic quarrels and, coupled with that, the fear of physical violence from their husbands. Secondly, jealousy between co-wives; thirdly, the result of extreme grief, and finally, illness.

In the first category, out of the thirteen cases recorded from our sample, seven were of the domestic quarrel type. Of these, one was complicated by a curse from the husband, another

20:Ominde I-5 (ca. 1948) 1952
FL11 Luo FL11

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INFANCY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Feeding

Under one year. For the first month of a baby's life its chief food is its mother's milk. But when the mother's milk is insufficient, gruel may be given as early as at two to three weeks old. Although cow's milk is now sometimes used instead of gruel, it is still chiefly regarded as a modern introduction by the missionaries in an effort to promote infant health.

Between the ages of one and three months, gruel and breast-feeding play about equal parts. When the mothers go out to work, suckling tends to be limited to mornings and evenings. The average age at which babies are given gruel is one month. From the third to the sixth month milk from the breast and gruel continue to form the child's main diet, but after this, gruel begins to prevail over breast-feeding. Although maize flour is occasionally used in the preparation of gruel, the usual flour for this purpose is obtained from sorghum and eleusine, a species of millet. Whenever possible a little sour milk is added to the mixture. Between five and six months certain children have frequent tastes of adult food given to them by their nurses.

Although nurses are allowed to give gruel to the children, difficulties in handling a baby sometimes result in under-feeding, which is often made worse by the low food-content of the gruel itself. Through training by nurses, babies are accustomed to adult food before their mothers actually give it to them, so it can happen that

21:Huxley Q, T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo FL11

over 3,000 people are spraying; here, with sixteen times the population, not 500 are. In the whole of Nyanza, with its 900,000 families, we have only sixty-seven Sahiwal bulls.

'On cattle, most of them won't budge. For instance, a man's prestige is somehow linked with that of his bulls, and they are most reluctant to castrate anything. Pioneers who try improved methods are unpopular and their neighbours are apt to gun for them; one man, for instance, had his pigs burnt alive. Still, we plug on. We have controlled rinderpest, if not East Coast fever—every year we give about 200,000 rinderpest inoculations. We export half a million hides and skins and are trying to improve their quality.'

It is perhaps worth noting that crops, whose improvement is considerable, are grown by women, but livestock is the exclusive concern of the men.

'In the years ahead,' this rather disillusioned vet concluded, 'we have only got to get across two basic principles: that a cow wants food all the year round, and that a calf needs milk. But it will take another twenty years before we make any real dent in Nyanza.'

On the other hand, some things unexpectedly catch on. A district officer who had seen fish-ponds in Malaya made half a dozen and stocked them with tilapia. Local people observed the ponds and, without any serious propaganda, dug others like them. Now there are over a thousand in Nyanza. They cost nothing, the Government provides free fingerlings and is full of plans for fish-ponds everywhere as the basis of a small industry.

V

Maseno is a dynamo of education. It was started by the Church Missionary Society. 'The general plan of campaign was based on the model of Iona,' wrote the Rev. John Willis, later Bishop of Uganda, who with Bishop Tucker chose the site in 1904. On 14th January, 1906, the first resident missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Savile, moved in—there was not much to move into, merely a grass hut under a tree that housed both the Saviles and a primitive dispensary. Nearly

21:Huxley Q,T-5 (no date) 1960 FL11 Luo FL11

fifty years later their son, Mr. Paddy Savile, after many years' service in Tanganyika, was to become Chief Agriculturalist to the Government and help to make a path for Progress through the land of his birth. Maseno mission was envisaged as 'a Christian base from which the Gospel might be carried far and wide into the surrounding country, with a school for the sons of Luo chiefs at which future leaders of the country would be trained in a Christian atmosphere.'

Four small boys called Ondiso, Odindo, Owiti and Orua were drafted from Kaimosi to form a nucleus and every 'chief' was asked to contribute two sons. 'Chief' was an arbitrary term, and the leading Luo objected strongly to the disappearance of their sons, probably regarding it as another form of slavery. In those days the Luo went stark naked, used beads or hoes for currency, and prized most highly the black ostrich feathers which warriors wore as head-dresses.

'In five years' time a hundred small boys from the school were sent out, two by two, for a fortnight at a time, to teach in Kisumu and in the villages. Then they came back to Maseno for a month for further teaching. In this way the original Iona idea began to be realized and Maseno became a base of Christian influence.' Bishop Willis developed this idea in a letter: 'It affords a shelter amid a sea of temptation; it makes Christian teaching applicable and Christian living a possibility.'*

So from four small and doubtless bewildered boys under a tree, Maseno developed until by the time of its golden jubilee it embraced primary, intermediate and secondary schools, a teacher-training college, a Jeanes school for adult education, a college for agricultural instructors and veterinary scouts. Even the girls had by this time been included, although their education for years lagged far behind that of their brothers.

At the time of my visit this part of Nyanza was a-buzz with rumour and diatribe, for the District Council in Kisumu had just been dissolved by Governor's decree. To balance the official line on this, I asked to meet a firebrand or two, and everyone agreed that Maseno was the place for a crackle of

*From *Fifty Years in Nyanza*, by Elizabeth Richards, M.A. Maseno Press, 1956.